

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00

ERDA-07 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 EPA-04 INR-07 IO-13

L-03 NSF-02 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-15 SS-15 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8898

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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DEPT PASS FDA FOR MICROBIOLOGIST DANIEL A. HUNT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, TBIO, SWEL, KS

SUBJECT: US/KOREA SHELLFISH SANITATION AGREEMENT: OIL SPILL

SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE REPORTS AN OIL SPILL WHICH LOCAL PRESS REPORTS HAVE SUGGESTED MAY ENDANGER AN OYSTER CULTIVATION AREA DESIGNATED AS SANITARY BY US FDA INSPECTORS OPERATING UNDER THE US/KOREA SHELLFISH SANITATION AGREEMENT. THE FISHERIES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE ROK OFFICE OF FISHERIES (OFA) IS INVESTIGATING THE SITUATION AND WILL PREPARE A DETAILED SURVEY REPORT. NEVERTHELESS THE DISTANCE OF THE SPILL AND OCEAN CURRENTS IN THE AREA VIRTUALLY PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE DESIGNATED AREA MAY BE CONTAMINATED. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESS REPORTS OF AUGUST 13, 1976 INDICATED THAT THE CHUNGMU OYSTER GROWING AREA IS MENACED BY AN OIL SPILL RESULTING FROM THE COLLISION ON JULY 23 OF A SMALL TANKER AND A PASSENGER BOAT OFF THE SOUTHERN ISLANDS OF SOUTH CHOLLA PROVINCE. NEITHER SHIP SANK BUT PRESS REPORTED DAMAGE TO ACQUACULTURE AT YOKCHI-DO (ISLAND) AND ESTIMATED THAT 1300 DRUMS OF BUNKER C OIL LEAKED BY THE TANKER WERE SPREADING EASTWARD TOWARD UNCLASSIFIED

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KOJE-DO (ISLAND).

2. IN RESPONSE TO AN EMBASSY INQUIRY, OFA REPORTED THAT ON JULY 31 IT HAD ORDERED ITS R AND D AGENCY AT PUSAN AND THE TWO NEIGHBORING PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS TO SURVEY THE SITUATION.

3. THUS FAR, OFA OFFICIALS HAVE DETERMINED THAT THE COLLISION TOOK PLACE AT 34 DEGREES 17 MINUTES NORTH - 127 DEGREES 47 MINUTES EAST WHICH IS ABOUT 7 MILES OFF SORI ISLAND. THE SPILL HAS APPROACHED YOKCHI ISLAND, BUT NO REPEAT NO DAMAGE TO SEAWEED BEDS HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY REPORTED. ABOUT 80 DRUMS OF DETERGENT WAS SPRAYED ON THE SLICK BETWEEN JULY 23 AND AUGUST 12 AND THAT EFFORT WILL BE CONTINUED. NO ESTIMATE OF THE QUANTITY OF FLOATING OIL IS AVAILABLE.

4. OFA BELIEVES THAT THE SPILL WILL NOT REPEAT NOT AFFECT ACQUACULTURAL AREAS WHICH ARE IN SHELTERED WATERS SURROUNDED BY MANY ISLANDS AND LOCATED ABOUT 30 NAUTICAL MILES NORTHEAST OF THE PRESENT LOCATION OF THE SPILL NEAR YOKCHI-DO. IT IS BEING CARRIED EASTWARD TOWARD KOJE-DO BY PREVAILING CURRENTS. THE CENTER OF THE AREA OF INTEREST TO FDA IS AT 4 DEGREES 47 MINUTES NORTH - 128 DEGREES 32 MINUTES EAST.

5. EMBASSY WILL REPORT ANY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS UPON COMPLETION OF THE OFA SURVEY.
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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